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Gen. James H. Wilson,
IN
JOINT DEBATE WITH
ERASTUS WIMAN, ESQ.

Before the Board of Trade and the Citizens of Wilmington, Delaware,

ON
Our Relations with the Dominion of Canada.

December 13, 1889.

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OUR RELATION WITH THE DOMINION OF CANADA.

The question to be discussed this evening is one of transcendent importance. It closely affects our permanent and paramount interests. It is not for to-day but for all time, or at least till it is settled in accordance with the fundamental laws of human progress. It is, in the words of Attorney General Longley one of the greatest questions "that can agitate the minds of a great people," and I am sure you will give it the most serious consideration. It is no new question, but ever since the first colonies were planted in New England, it has confronted the English speaking race.

Mr. Wiman, who is also to address you, is a Canadian by birth, for many years a resident of New York, though I believe he is still a British subject. He has given most careful attention to the subject, and as he has clearly shown, by the pamphlet which he has sent to many of you, he is thoroughly

acquainted with the resources of the Dominion of Canada, with the character of its population and with the operation of its system of Government. His statements of fact are entitled to your undoubting credence. Indeed, he is an expert on all Canadian matters, and I am sure you will cordially join me in returning thanks to him, not only for the information he has given us, but for the candor and clearness with which he states his views. Whatever your conclusions may be in regard to their feasibility and soundness, you can have no doubt as to the earnestness and ability with which he puts them forth.

He contends that the best possible results can be obtained for both Canada and the United States by the establishment of a Customs Union or Zollverein, similar to that suggested by Prussia in 1818 and afterwards joined by all the German States except Austria. Obviously, the immediate results of this measure would be to abolish all the custom-houses on the frontier and to remove them to the sea coast, or to the maritime cities. The tariff would be, necessarily the same for both countries, the revenue therefrom would be pooled, and then divided, pro-rata according to population, between the two governments. But above all, and this is the principal end aimed at by the proposition, absolute free trade would prevail between all the provinces of the Dominion on the one side, and all the States of the Union on the other, just as it prevails at present between all the States themselves, while a common protective tariff would be maintained and enforced against all the World besides, including the British Empire of course. It is also worthy of observation that Mr. Wiman in submitting this proposition expresses the belief, notwithstanding the prejudice against it on the part of the Canadian Government, that the Canadian people can be brought to support it. It does not become me to gainsay this opinion for it may possibly be true. Certainly from my point of view, it would be greatly to the interest of the Canadians at least, and they would be untrue

to their reputation for shrewdness, if they did not so consider it. He also expresses the belief that Her Majesty's Government, would consent to the arrangement, but in view of the fact that the chief aim of that Government has been for the last two hundred years to maintain the commercial supremacy of England, and the integrity of the Empire, and that in all this time no British statesman has ever for a moment been false to that policy, it may well be doubted, if Her Majesty's Government could be bought in a case of so much importance as this, to forego, the exercise of its constitutional right of *veto*. I do not intend to delay my argument to discuss this aspect of the case for after all, the real question for us to consider is, will commercial union solve the problem before us, rather than can its adoption be secured. Our object should be, to discover what is the best policy for the Dominion of Canada and the United States, and having agreed as to that, our further object should be to devise the means of carrying that policy into effect, without let or hindrance from any other power in the World.

And here let me say, that while I admit the great interest of the entire British Empire in this question of policy, I contend in the words used by Mr. Everett, while Secretary of State, (in considering the joint proposition submitted by the Earl of Malmsbury and Mr. Turgot, that our government should join the governments of England and France, in guaranteeing the perpetual sovereignty of Spain over the Island of Cuba,) that we have an interest all our own, and "greater than that of any other nation in that question." I contend in this case as in that, that it is mainly an American question, and hope to show that however great be the interest of Her Majesty's Government in the policy and possession of the Dominion of Canada, our own interests though widely different, are even greater than hers—greater by the fact that we are neighbors, whose possessions adjoin, and whose boundaries are coterminous with each other for over four thousand miles, while the

Dominion is separated from England and the rest of the British Empire on either hand, by the width of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans—greater by the fact that we have many interests of the first magnitude and importance in common, and which no human power but our own can divide or separate, while Canada and England have but few, and they mostly sentimental interests, to bind them together.

I will not say that Canada and the United States in the words of Mr. Canning—referring to Mexico and the United States—“are too neighborly to be friends,” but I do say that they are too neighborly not to be better friends.

While Mr Wiman, and perhaps many others, believe in the scheme of a Commercial or Customs Union, and in its capacity to remove friction, promote a friendly and neighborly feeling, and to add greatly to the security and permanence of peace, I shall endeavor to show that they are sincerely mistaken that such a union is impracticable and visionary, and that even if consummated it would not settle our relations on a fair or satisfactory basis; that while it might remove certain commercial questions of minor importance from the field of contention, it would certainly leave other and much graver questions entirely unsettled, and as liable as they are now to embroil us in war, not with Canada alone, but with the whole British Empire of which Canada forms such an important part.

The area of Canada is 3,500,000 square miles, it has 300,000 square miles of wheat growing lands, 130,000 square miles of coal lands, the richest iron mines, and nearly one-half of all the fresh water in the world. We learn elsewhere that it has 2,300,000 square miles suitable for the production of grasses and coarser grains, including 500,000 square miles suitable for growing indian corn. The value of the land is practically without limit. Its productiveness is remarkable, and yet after one hundred and twenty-eight years of British rule, and an area greater than our own, it contains a population of less than 5,000,000 souls, over one-quarter of which

are of French descent. Why has its progress been so slow? Surely not because of bad government, nor an inhospitable climate. Surely not because the labor of the husbandman is not amply requited by nature. We must look further for an answer, and the answer is found in the fact, that the door of our market has been closed by our protective system against its citizens, while that of its European market, lies beyond seas three thousand miles away! Its young men emigrate to the States; and those who come to it from Europe will not abide within its borders. Even Mr Wiman has left the Dominion, and if report does not misrepresent him, has prospered too, in a way that fully justifies the step he has taken. He has come to a region—"almost a world itself"—given up wholly inside to free trade—to a Customs Union under the Constitution of the United States, greater than any ever before known and seeing how that union has been protected, that it has grown and flourished as no other ever grew, and how it must continue to grow, he asks that Canada and the adjacent Islands shall be admitted into it, without bearing any of the political burdens which are imposed upon its constituent members, and merely because he thinks it would benefit the commerce of Canada, and the United States to the same extent. It is a trite saying that we miss a great many good things in this world by not asking for them. There is not only no harm in asking, for "unless ye ask ye shall not receive," but in this case I am confident it would not be wise for us to give. We are under no obligation to give, and equally, it is no offence if we decline to give.

The information given by Mr. Wiman throws a flood of light upon the question under consideration, but it does not go far enough to enable us to arrive at a just understanding of the case, or at a proper solution of the great questions involved. Let me endeavor to supply the deficiency.

Those who are familiar with the history of North America

will recall the fact that even before the settlement of Plymouth and Jamestown, the French had settled Acadia and Canada, and that with incredible resolution they carried the French flag through the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes to the Northwest, the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. Those who have read Parkman's thrilling histories will recall the Christian work and daring explorations of Marquette, Joliet and the Sieur de la Salle, as well as the heroism of Champlain, Frontenac, and Montcalm. While the English colonies were struggling into existence between the Atlantic Seaboard, and the Alleghanies, a French Empire was growing up on the banks of the St. Lawrence, and of the Mississippi. Border disputes, intrigues and encroachments in times of peace, alternating with numerous and protracted wars, for a period of almost a hundred and fifty years, retarded the occupation and influenced the destinies of the American Continent. The great disputants were France and England—the French Canadians stirred up the savage Indians to rapine and murder; the English Colonists fought with the fury of unrelenting hate. France based her claims to the interior of the continent upon colonization and discovery, England on the rights of her colonies to own indefinitely westward. Every school boy is familiar with the atrocities of the French and Indian wars; with the story of Sir William Phipps' capture of Port Royal in Acadia, with Winthrop's expedition against Quebec with de Rouville's sack and massacre of Deerfield and Haverhill, with General Hill's subjugation of Acadia, and its reappearance in history as Nova Scotia, with the capture of Phillipsburg and the island of Cape Breton by the sailors and militia of Massachusetts under Colonel Pepperell, with its restoration to the French by England to the great dissatisfaction of the men who had captured it, and finally, with the fact that over a hundred years of almost constant war, ended, with each side holding only its own. The decisive struggle for the possession of North America began in 1753. Louisiana had now grown to be a wealthy self-

sustaining colony. The missionary posts which connected it with Canada had been converted into military posts—while English trading companies were seeking to push their operations into the Great West.

George Washington made his first expedition to the Ohio, in 1754, to spy out the land about Fort du Quesne; Braddock's expedition and defeat followed soon after. Nova Scotia was again captured in 1755. The Battle of Crown Point was fought the same year; Montcalm appeared upon the scene and captured Oswego, in 1756. Fort William Henry and Fort Edward fell into his hands in 1757. So far the advantages were all with the French and consternation had spread throughout the land. The aged Col. Pepperell was made Lieut. General and placed at the head of 20,000 Massachusetts Militia. The situation was one of great concern.

A meeting of delegates from all the colonies was held at Albany, and a plan of union for the common defense was drawn up by Franklin and unanimously adopted—but it was rejected by the Ministry at home because it was deemed to be more dangerous to the domination of England over her own colonies, than to their French and Indian antagonists. The elder Pitt was now Prime Minister and with the grasp and foresight of a great statesman put forth every effort to rescue the imperilled colonies. Abercrombie was sent to command in America. His forces, mostly colonists, amounted to 50,000 men, while the entire French population in America could not at that time have exceeded 75,000 souls. Louisburg in the East, and Fort du Quesne in the West, were captured. Oswego in the centre, was retaken, but in spite of every effort to dislodge them, the French still held Lake Champlain and Ticonderoga. Another and a greater effort was necessary, and at this juncture Pitt sent Wolfe with reinforcements to take Quebec. This great and decisive movement was made at the suggestion of Dr. Franklin, and as you all know it resulted in a complete victory for the English and Colonial arms. Both Montcalm and Wolfe were killed, but the power of France

was broken forever by the victory on the Heights of Abraham.

This signal event took place on September 13, 1759, but the peace of Paris was not made till 1762—at which time it will be remembered that France ceded to England all of her possessions east of the Mississippi, except the island and City of New Orleans, while frankly confessing that she could no longer defend them. She ceded New Orleans together with the vast territory west of the Mississippi, by England's permission, to Spain, as a buffer to the colonial dependencies of the next greatest European power in America.

For the first time since the colonies were planted they had secured a stable peace, because for the first time both the English colonies and Canada, their implacable enemy, had been brought under the domination of the British Crown. Curious as it may appear, however, England was to a great extent ignorant of, or indifferent to, the great prize she had won, and more than one of her statesmen were in favor of restoring Canada to the hands of the French, as the best possible means of keeping the colonies from growing too fast. But for William Pitt and the help of Dr. Franklin's celebrated pamphlet, which put the case in its true light before the English people, Canada might have been exchanged for the insignificant island of Gaudaloupe. In that pamphlet, issued one hundred and twenty-eight years ago, the proper doctrine was plainly laid down—not alone for the English Government but for all mankind. It was confidently asserted that the security of a dominion is a justifiable and prudent ground upon which to demand territorial cessions from the enemy, that although Canada might have but little value for the French, it made no difference if it had great value to us—that it had been used as a base of operations for both French and Indian operations against us, and that its possession by the English Crown would afford the best possible security to us. He justified his advice, by appealing to the almost unbroken usage of nations "in this situation." He contended "that the

security and quiet of provinces and states have always been deemed sufficient reasons, when supported by power for disposing of rights, and that such disposition had never been looked upon as indicating a want of moderation." Finally, he asserted, "If the French remain in Canada and Louisiana you may fix the boundaries as you will, you will always be neighbors and can never have peace!" The possession of Canada, he urged, "implies every security and it ought to be had while in our power," and on this irrefragable argument it was held and has been held ever since by Great Britain.

It is worthy of remark, that when the Revolution broke out a few years later Dr. Franklin was sent to induce the Canadians to join us, but in spite of his best efforts he failed, though he always claimed that his failure was due to the ignorance of the Canadian people, rather than to any feeling of loyalty to the English Government. In alluding to the matter afterwards he laughingly declared, that "the next mission to Canada should be one of schoolmasters," though it must not be forgotten that the Canadians were Catholic French and had always regarded the Protestant Yankees as their hereditary enemies. It is an interesting circumstance that Dr. Franklin was one of the commissioners of the United States to negotiate the Treaty of Peace and partition with England, and that when Mr. Oswald, the gentleman who first acted as the agent of the Earl of Shelbourne and the English Government spoke of "reconciliation," the wise and watchful Doctor adroitly suggested the cession of Canada to us, as the best and most acceptable reparation England could make, and at the same time as the best prevention of future wars. It would lead me too far from the subject of discussion, to follow the course of the negotiations and to explain how England cheated New England out of a large part of Canada in 1763, or how France hoping that chance would enable her some day to recover it, and Spain fearing that if the United States got it they would also soon get

Louisiana and her other American Colonies, united in playing into England's hand and thus kept Canada out of our possession in 1783.*

I cannot forbear remarking however, that the principles so clearly laid down by Dr. Franklin in justification of the transfer of Canada to the English, have never been lost sight of. And it is certain that the British cabinet hoped by retaining it in their control that the now independent, but scarcely united States might be induced to gravitate toward it and resume their alligiance to the mother country, and that in the event of future war it would serve as a safe base of operations against us, as it did to our almost infinite cost and humiliation, in the war of 1812.

From the foregoing statement it will be seen that England's title to Canada is based solely upon the right of conquest, obtained by—

“The good old rule * * the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.”

It is also evident that the Colonists assisted right valiantly in applying that rule; they did a large share of the fighting, and bore more than their share of the suffering and expense, but to this day, their just share of the great conquest has been withheld from them. In making this assertion, I am not unmindful of the fact, that the Treaty of Peace acknowledged our right to participate in the fisheries, which went with Canada, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, but a separate question has grown out of this right and I shall refer to it further on.

My point now is, that England, although taking to herself, in the original cession all that New England ever

* For many interesting statements connected with the events of that period, reference is made to the Life of Franklin, to Lecky's History of England in the 18th Century, and to co-temperaneous French memories and State papers.

claimed, failed to give us the share of Canada, to which we felt ourselves entitled by joint conquest, and that although she has withheld it from us for over a hundred years, she can hardly blame us for claiming it whenever it becomes essential for the protection of our paramount national interests.

If I have read the story aright, it fixes a taint upon the character of England's title, which might become fatal, if we should find our permanent and paramount interests impelling us towards the acquisition of her American dependencies. Doctor Franklin's doctrine was good enough for England, and under similar circumstances ought to be good enough for us. Besides the law of our national growth seems to be : "Accretion not colonization"—accretion by purchase, as in the case of Louisiana, Florida, Arizona and Alaska ; by treaty and mutual agreement, as in the case of Texas, or by conquest, as in the case of California.* The doctrine of manifest destiny has thus announced itself to every thoughtful student of history. It has not ceased to work for the glory of the American name and cannot cease, or be defeated of its ends till the American flag floats over every foot of the North American continent. It is as impossible to suspend this law as it is to make the waters of the St. Lawrence and Lake Ontario flow backwards over the Falls of Niagara ! It is as immutable and as constant as the law of gravitation. It lies at the very base of American progress, and although dormant at times it is never absent. It may work slowly, as men measure time, but it works as steadily and irresistibly as fate itself. Whether it require one year or a hundred, or even a thousand to complete its task, can make but little difference in the end. No policy on our part, or on the part of the Canadians, or even on the part of a federated British Empire, can abrogate or annul this law, and yet the question of policy is an important one to this generation, for policy may hasten or delay the fulfillment of our destiny, though it can not defeat it.

*See Wharton's Digest for a more extended statement of this law.

My friend Mr. Wiman urges the American people on both sides of the dividing line, to adopt the plan of a Customs or Commercial Union, because he believes that that plan will facilitate and increase trade between them, and that unrestricted trade will ultimately lead to a political union. I oppose that plan because it is opposed to the law of our national development, and to the "American system"; because I cannot regard commerce as a solidarity—because we have not the same interest in Canada and the Canadians that we have in America and the Americans. I am willing to admit that unrestricted free trade with us would be a good thing for the Canadians, and that it might be beneficial to us in a commercial sense, but I believe also in the old doctrine that charity should begin at home—and that we should first consider, how a Custom's Union would affect us in another and a higher sense; how it would operate upon our great political and permanent interests. In considering this plan we should not lose sight of the fact that we had (partial) free trade under the reciprocity treaty from 1853 to 1865—we should not forget that the trade between the two countries increased rapidly, till it became greater than the trade between Canada and England. Neither should we forget that although the arrangement was altogether one sided and favorable to the Canadians, it utterly failed to draw us closer together. The Canadians got all the profit from it they could; they fattened upon it and grew arrogant and truculent. But instead of growing more friendly to us, immediately after the outbreak of the great rebellion, they took the side of the South, and from that day forth they and the majority of their kinsmen beyond sea, became the steadfast friends of the Confederates, and did all they dared do to promote their success. They seized upon the Trent affair in 1861, to organize a volunteer army of nearly fifty thousand men, and backed by the Jingo element in England, began an agitation in favor of the federation of the British Colonies in North America, as a step in the federation of the British

Empire. It is true that this measure was not consummated till after the close of the rebellion, and the accession of the Jingo ministry under Disraeli, but it is notorious that it was conceived and carried through in a spirit of hostility to us. Conscious of the injury they had done us, and would have done us, during our struggle for national existence, they and their British suzerain, adopted the measure at last, as the most efficient means of defending themselves from the wrath of the neighbor they had so outrageously wronged. But their guilty consciences exaggerated the danger. Exulting in the reestablishment of the Union and rejoicing in the return of blessed peace we hastened to our homes forgiving all mankind. It is true, that we warned the French allies of Maximilian from Mexico while we were disbanding our armies and beating our swords into pruning hooks, but neither statesmen nor generals gave adequate consideration to a settlement with England. Both Senator Sumner and General Grant had a correct idea of what should be done, but, in the political confusion which followed the assassination of Lincoln and the accession of Johnson to the Presidency they failed to give proper expression to it and so our great opportunity slipped by unimproved if not entirely unheeded. I cannot withhold the reflection, that if we had, immediately after the close of the great rebellion, turned our victorious columns northward, calling the gallant confederates to our assistance, we should have taken Canada in sixty days, and forever banished the British flag from the North American Continent. That would have been a settlement of the Alabama claims after the "high Roman fashion," and History would have said we did right. We could have set in the field at that time five hundred thousand of the best infantry and fifty thousand of the best cavalry the world had ever seen. We had then the best navy in existence, and such an enterprise would have received the approval and arrested the admiration of mankind, and it would have moved the hand of time forward for us by a century at least.

But returning to the question under consideration, permit me to add, that I oppose the policy of Commercial Union, because it is inadequate, as well as unjust. It does not cover the whole ground of our relations with the Dominion of Canada. For the sake of argument, I may admit, that it would settle our commercial relations, on a satisfactory and even an advantageous basis—but there are other questions than questions of trade; other relations than those of commerce, and I know I shall be pardoned for saying, that those other relations, are in the life and destiny of a great people, of far more importance than matters of mere trade and barter. There are other questions and interests which even now claim our thoughtful attention, and in reference to which we must adopt a broad, comprehensive, and national policy.

I refer of course—

1. To the fisheries question.
2. To the Behring's sea question.
3. To the collection of impost duties at the frontier; and to the faithful execution of the Exclusion Act.
4. To the free navigation of the St. Lawrence, and of the canals connected with it, and with the Great Lakes.
5. To the regulation of the Transit Trade.
6. To the enforcement of the Interstate Commerce Act.
7. To the proper protection of our own transporting interests.
8. To the great duty of looking to the National defence.
9. And finally, to the unimpeded operation of the law of our national growth and development.

I am not unmindful of the fact, that it is proposed by Mr. Wiman and his friends, to allow us equal rights in the fisheries, accompanied by the transportation of our catch through Canada, in bond free of duty, as a concession for the free trade which they would secure by a Commercial Union, and that this would settle the fisheries question so

long as the Commercial Union existed. But we should scorn to accept such a settlement. The fisheries regulations of the Dominion are at best a relic of barbarism, and an usurpation of sovereignty over the waters of the sea which should not be permitted for a day. Sea fishing should as a matter of right, be open to all mankind, and inasmuch as it is commerce, it should be regulated both on shore and at sea in accordance with the humane principles, which regulate all other commerce. Besides, the fisheries question was one which arose two hundred years ago, and became from time to time an actuating cause of war between the English and French colonists. It was first settled by the joint conquest of Canada and its dependencies in 1761, and remained settled till the treaty of 1818. As before stated, we contributed more than our share to that conquest—and without reference to the broader and more humane principles to which I have just alluded, we are entitled by the same right of conquest to every privilege the Canadians themselves enjoy—and no other settlement of the question can ever be permanent or satisfactory to the American fisherman, or consonant with the feelings and interests of the country at large. To “settle” it by the establishment of a Zollverein or Custom’s Union, is to further complicate it. In short, the proposed measure does not “settle” it at all, but defers the real issue, to the vague and indefinite future.

The collection of duties at the frontier, would no longer be necessary if the Custom’s Union were established—but the boundary line would still exist, for all other purposes, and especially for the exclusion of the Chinese, who are now admitted into Canada by the payment of a head tax of fifty dollars, and as soon as they are inside, proceed to steal across the borders into the States. If they are caught and taken back, the Canadian officials will not let them re-enter their country unless they pay another fifty dollars. It may be answered, that Canada could be induced under the Custom’s Union to change its laws on this subject and to adopt ours—

and that we could depend upon Canadian officials to enforce the new laws. To this I reply, we can depend upon nobody, and should depend upon nobody but our own officials, in regard to matters of such importance.

The navigation of the St. Lawrence and its canals, and of the Great Lakes and the rivers and canals connecting them, free from let or hindrance, and from tolls which discriminate against our commerce, is a matter of the gravest importance. England has never admitted us to such privileges as a matter of right. She contends and has always contended, that a State lying on both sides of a navigable river next to the sea, has a right in accordance with the unbroken practice of nations, to prohibit States lying above them from using the river at all, if it has the power to enforce its prohibition. In pursuance of this contention she has permitted us to use the St. Lawrence only in accordance with treaty stipulations, and while those stipulations, have generally been fair and liberal—indeed I may say—strictly reciprocal in terms, it is a matter of notoriety that Canada has continually discriminated against commerce intended for American cities and ports, and in favor of that intended for Canadian cities and ports. And to make the matter worse, Sir John A. McDonald, the Canadian Premier contends that there is no injustice in such discrimination.

When it became known in 1802 that Spain had retroceded Louisiana to France and thereby given to the latter power, the control of the Mississippi River, and the ability to cancel our right of deposit at New Orleans, Mr. Jefferson who was then President, wrote a remarkable letter to Chancellor Livingston our minister to France, in which he set forth in clear and unmistakable terms, that the transfer of that vast region and its great river, from a weak power, such as Spain then was, to a strong one such as France was then becoming, if persisted in, must be regarded by us as an event which would "completely reverse all the political relations of the United States," and form "a new epoch in our political affairs." He pointed

out that it threatened our right of deposit at New Orleans, and to the free navigation of the Mississippi, and must be regarded as putting France in an attitude of defiance towards us. He impressively added:

"The day that France takes possession of New Orleans fixes the sentence which is to retain her forever within her low-water mark. It seals the union of two nations who, in conjunction, can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation. We must turn all our attention to a maritime force, for which our resources place us on very high ground, and having formed and connected together a power which may render reinforcement of her settlements here impossible to France, make the first cannon which shall be fired in Europe the signal for the tearing up of any settlement she may have made, and for holding the two continents of America in sequestration for the common purposes of the United British and American nations.

This is not a state of things we seek or desire. It is one which this measure, if adopted by France, forces on us as necessarily as any other cause, by the laws of nature, brings on its necessary effect."

The substance of this letter was by direction of the President communicated to the First Consul, and produced a profound impression upon him. No one who reads the very able and exhaustive "History of the United States of America during the First Administration of Thomas Jefferson, by Henry Adams," (Vols. I and II,) can doubt that it was at this time the intention of Bonaparte, acting by the advice of Talleyrand, to take possession of Louisiana under the treaty of retrocession, and make it the basis for the re-establishment of the French Colonial system, or that this intention was defeated primarily, by the revolution of Toussaint Louverture and his successors, and secondarily by the frightful disasters which overtook Leclerc, Rochambeau and the forty thousand soldiers who lost their lives in the gallant but futile effort to re-establish the authority of France in San Domingo. Thoroughly discouraged by these losses and the expense they entailed, and fearing that the alliance between America and England, which Mr. Jefferson had threatened,

would, if entered into, put an effectual end to his pretensions, not only in America, but in Europe, Bonaparte made haste to sell us both, Louisiana and the Mississippi, and thus remove them forever from the realm of hostile contention.

The doctrine laid down by Mr. Jefferson has recently been reannounced by Mr. Edward Dicey, an English writer of distinction, in a paper discussing the tendency of large and powerful nations to absorb smaller or weaker ones, and justifying such absorption when made under the pressure of "permanent and paramount interests." History teaches us by numberless examples that an appeal to this rule is generally followed by war, which since the world began has been the last argument of Republics as well as of Kings. Fortunately we were not required to act under it in the case of the Mississippi and Louisiana territory, and I hope we shall not be required to apply it in the case of the St. Lawrence and the Dominion of Canada !

But no one—certainly no American—denies that Mr. Jefferson was justified in announcing it to the First Consul in terms which could not be misunderstood. At that time our entire population did not exceed 6,000,000 souls. We had but a few scattered settlements and a population of less than 500,000, on the Mississippi and its tributaries and all their commerce, indeed, nearly all their movable possessions could have been carried in a hundred flat-boats, but the principles and arguments were clearly applicable then and they are applicable now, that our population has grown to more than 60,000,000, over 20,000,000 of which live in States and Territories bordering on the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes, and send their commerce to market by the numberless vessels which navigate them, or by the railroads which traverse the country bordering upon them. It is said that the tonnage passing through the canals of the Sault Ste. Marie, and of the St. Clair flats, now exceeds that of the Suez Canal, and no one can doubt that it is a thousand-fold greater than the tonnage of the Mississippi in 1803, and several times

greater than that of the Mississippi at the present time. To permit that tonnage to be discriminated against in any manner whatever by the Dominion of Canada, is entirely inadmissible, and it is certain that no administration could stand a day against the clamor of the American people should that discrimination become serious. But what would be the outcry—what would be the result if Great Britain should for any reason undertake to stop our commerce on the St. Lawrence altogether? It is useless to say there is no danger of this, for there is danger so long as war is possible, and war is possible so long as Canada remains a part of the British Empire. It is just as possible now that the Canadians occupy one side and we the other, as it was one hundred and twenty-eight years ago with the French Colonists on one side and the English on the other. The greatest difference at present, is that the boundary line is over 3500 miles long, not counting that between Alaska and the Northwest territory, with our people pressing up against it at every point from Maine to Washington, while at the time of the peace of Paris, it was less than 1000 miles long and lay mostly in an uninhabited wilderness. No Commercial Union can adequately meet the difficulties of this boundary line, nor remove the dangers inseparable from arbitrary foreign control of the St. Lawrence river or of the country adjacent to it. Such a union may defer or minimize those difficulties and dangers, but ultimately they must reappear to plague us, till they are settled by the only practicable and safe method—the annexation of Canada.

Since the introduction of railroads, and *parri-passu*, with their extension from the Atlantic seaboard into the Great West and across the continent, a new factor has appeared in our problem of transportation. As a matter of convenience to our own people, and of profit to the Canadians, it has gradually come to be a custom to permit the transportation of goods, wares and merchandise, in bond and duty free from points in the United States, by rail, through Canada, to

other points in the United States, under such regulations as the governments of Canada and the United State might prescribe. It has also come to be the custom that either country may export or import goods, wares and merchandise through the other free of duty, and these practices constitute what is commonly known as the Transit Trade. This trade was at first carried on under laws enacted by the Canadian Parliament and the American Congress and later under certain provisions of the treaty of Washington entered into in 1871. And the laws, regulations and practice, were intended to be reciprocal, but partly from the nature of the case, and partly by the superior watchfulness of the Canadians, neither the laws, regulations, nor practice are reciprocal. The Canadians have a great advantage in all this, and derive a great profit from it, while we get only the petty advantage of two more competing railway lines "across lots," between the seaboard and the northwest.

Commercial Union would, of course, continue and extend this trade, but in doing so would perpetuate a greivous wrong against our own transporting interests. Ever since the establishment of our Government under the present Constitution it has been the well settled policy of our legislation to reserve our domestic carrying trade for the profit of our own people. Almost the first law Congress ever passed was the Navigation act, which in terms, provides that no ship bearing a foreign register or having a foreign ownership shall ever engage in our coasting trade, and this has been our unbroken rule on the sea coast from that day to this. It was also our rule on the Great Lakes, till the treaty of Washington, made an exception in favor of vessels carrying the flag of Her Britannic Majesty, and forming transportation routes, which should be continued by rail through the Dominion of Canada. An interesting story has been told of how this extraordinary provision was smuggled into the treaty by the free use of champagne, but we cannot stop here to inquire into the truth of this story. Suffice it to say, that our

Lake carrying trade was speedily ruined by the practice which at once sprung up under the treaty, and that this caused such an outcry from American citizens owning ships on the Great Lakes, that President Arthur terminated that part of the treaty, by proclamation, at the earliest possible day allowed by its terms. But under another article of the treaty, and by the Revised Statutes the trade is still carried on extensively by three Canadian railroads, and what makes the matter worse, is the fact, that two of these railroads, the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Pacific, were built, or greatly aided, by subsidies given to them in pursuance of the commercial and political policy of the Government of Great Britain. And it is worth while to note that a writer in the *Westminster Review* for February, 1888, frankly declares that the "Confederal Union" (between the British Colonies in North America) "would not be worth the paper upon which it was written but for the Canadian Pacific Railroad!"

In view of the fact that our own railroads have been still further hampered by the Interstate Commerce Law, and especially by that provision of the law known as the "long and short haul clause," (the nature of which you all understand), while the Canadian railroads are necessarily left entirely free from its penalties and provisions, it would seem to be not only fair but obligatory that we should repeal all laws and abrogate all treaties which permit such spoliation and injustice. Having bound the hands of our railroad managers, common justice, if not a decent regard for the fundamental principles of American polity should induce us, not only, not to extend the practice by establishing a Commercial Union with Canada but to put an end to it by repealing all laws and regulations which have been construed to allow it. We should in all fairness shut the Canadian roads out of the transit trade along our northern borders just as we have shut all foreign ships out of our maritime coasting trade. We can do this all the more readily, because our own railroads are ample for the accommodation of our traffic, and their rates are regulated by

competition between themselves, by the water routes through the great lakes and the canals, and finally by the stringent provisions of the Interstate Commerce Law, itself.

In discussing other points, I have already touched upon the great duty of the government to look to the national defence. Neither Mr. Wiman nor any other friend of his measure, has set up the pretence that a Commercial Union would provide adequately for the protection of our northern frontier in case of war with England. If Canada were an independent power or the Millennium had come, such a union might do much to render war improbable, and hence to defer the work and expense of protecting our borders from invasion, but the Millennium is not yet at hand and Canada is not an independent power. She cannot even enter into a Commercial Union without the express permission of the suzerain nation which controls her. She would not dare understate it against the veto of Her Britannic Majesty's Government! Canada alone, or even Canada aided by the entire confederation of which she is a part, can give us but little concern for our safety or progress, but the Dominion of Canada, as an integral part of the world-encircling British Empire—the richest, the most aggressive and most grasping empire that has ever existed, is altogether a different and a greater thing. War with the latter is always possible. It may break out any day, even without the agency, concurrence or permission of any British dependency and it behooves us to make timely preparation against that danger and its consequences. When it is remembered that in every great emergency which has overtaken us since the peace of Paris was signed in 1763, the arbitrary will, the crafty diplomacy, the bottomless purse, or the mailed hand of Great Britain has made itself felt, if it has not turned the scale against us, no sensible reflecting man can contend that Commercial Union could properly provide for the safety of our exposed and defenceless borders. Its most striking effect would be to increase the wealth and population and strengthen the

hands of the country which would necessarily be used as a base of operation against us.

As I have stated before, the law of our national growth is by accretion, not colonization; by annexation, under the Constitution, not by commercial contract; in short, it is by political union always, and never by customs union! Every page of our history has this law plainly written in it. Even the story of the great rebellion inculcates this lesson. It teaches not only union but political union, under the Constitution and the law of the land, where all are equal, and where absolute free trade prevails, but it also teaches that higher law, that whatever is necessary to the preservation of the national life, and the protection of its permanent and paramount interests, is justifiable and will in the fullness of time most surely come to pass.

In view of all this, and much more that might be said, it seems to me that Commercial Union with the Dominion of Canada is incompatible with our paramount national interests and with the law of our national growth, and cannot therefore become the policy of the American people or any considerable number of them; that such a policy is fanciful and inadequate and, did I not believe in the honesty of those who have brought it forward I should be tempted to say that they cannot be sincere in advocating it, and that there must be a tremendous job concealed in it somewhere, or that they are advocating it for the purpose of delaying rather than promoting that political Union, essential to permanent peace and to the realization of our manifest destiny.

I cannot admit that such a policy is favored by the leading politicians of the Dominion of Canada much less, by the Statesmen of England and indeed we know from numerous interviews with both, published by the NEW YORK SUN during the past year, it is certain that they are not, and almost as certain that they can not be brought to support such a measure so long as England continues her commercial and imperial policy. I feel sure that it is not for

the best interests of the masses of Canadian people, because its immediate effect would be to defer the entry of the Canadian provinces into the American Union. I believe that this would be the result, because it would give to the Canadians free trade with us, the only thing that all classes concur in saying they want from us. If this were granted it is obvious that so long as Great Britain should continue to build their forts, subsidizes their railroads, canals and steamship lines, fight their battles, guarantee their public debts, flatter their pride, and bestow hereditary titles upon their great men, sprung mostly from the humbler walks of life, so long would they strive to maintain their position in the British Empire.

After careful consideration, I do not hesitate to express the opinion that our true policy is to invite all the British Provinces in North America to come into our glorious union, as states and territories, on the assurance that our government will assume the public debt of the Dominion and of the independent provinces. This could not fail to give them every privilege and blessing they now enjoy, except such as are connected with hereditary titles, and it would give them in addition the inestimable boon of absolute self-government, accompanied by free and unrestricted trade, with sixty millions of the most enlightened, the most progressive, and the most wealthy people in the world. Their waste lands, are, or soon will be required by us, and would therefore be speedily taken up for cultivation; their mines of precious metals, coal and iron, would be opened and worked, their forests would be utilized, and every resource would be developed to their infinite enrichment, and to the promotion of our common peace, safety and glory.

Should they fail to accept this generous offer, and decide to adhere to their British allegiance, they can not regard it as at all unkind or unneighborly in us, if, instead of consenting to a Commercial or Customs Union, we at once repeal the laws and abrogate the treaty under which the Transit Trade is conducted; insist upon our full share of the fisheries;

our equal right to the navigation of the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes and the rivers connecting them, without hindrance or discrimination; the rigid enforcement of our customs laws over every foot of the international boundary line; the execution of our Chinese Exclusion Act without evasion; a due respect to our right of national defence; and finally upon the unimpeded operation of the law of our national growth, with all that the law in its fullest sense can be construed to mean. The American people did not make the boundary line, and cannot be blamed if they look upon it as separating them from a foreign and frequently a hostile nation. It became a necessity by the will of Great Britain. The North American Continent is a unit, and it became peopled almost exclusively by the Anglo Saxon race, through the operation of natural laws. No earthly arrangement can defeat the destiny, intended for either, but it becomes us as good citizens to strive to discover what that destiny is to be, and to do our part manfully to hasten its consummation.

Permit me to say in conclusion, that I think I see clearly the road on which we are compelled, perhaps all unconsciously, to travel. It lies fair and broad before us, and leads straight forward without crook or turn to a continental republic, extending from the tropics to the north polar sea, and bounded on all sides by the ocean which encircles the world. The people within it, as well as the separate States which govern their local affairs are free and equal, and subject only to that written Constitution, which the wisest of English Statesman has pronounced to be the grandest instrument of Government ever framed at a single epoch by a single set of men !







